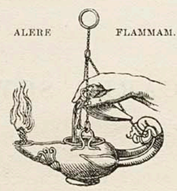

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INTRODUCTION.

THIS series of Plates was made under the superintendence of Mr. Thomas Bell, to illustrate his 'Monograph of the Testudinata,' a work in which the author intended to represent and describe not only all the known recent, but also fossil species. The publication of this extensive work was unfortunately interrupted (by the failure of the publisher) when only two-thirds of the plates that had been prepared (which in themselves formed but a limited portion of the intended work) were published.

We are informed in the original Prospectus that "The whole of the drawings are from the inimitable pencil of Mr. James Sowerby; and the author feels that he is only doing justice to that distinguished artist in natural objects when he states that in correctness of delineation, minute and elaborate execution, and taste in the general arrangement of the figures, nothing within the range of zoographical illustration has ever surpassed them. The Plates will be lithographed by Mr. Lear, coloured (so as to form the most perfect *facsimiles* of the drawings) by Mr. Bayfield. The joint talent of these excellent artists, exhibited in the illustrations of the Psittacidæ of the former gentleman, renders it unnecessary to say that the ability of the painter will be ably seconded by that of the lithographer and colourist." Which I entirely indorse.

The unsold stock and unpublished plates were purchased at Mr. Highley's sale by Mr. Sotheran, and the work has been in abeyance for many years.

Mr. Bell has declined to furnish the text for the unpublished plates. In this